

WELLINGTON (SOMERSET)
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1913,

BY

Mr. R. W. H. Meredith, M.R.C.S.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
(TEMPORARY).

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ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1913

By MR. R. W. H. MEREDITH, M.R.C.S.,
Medical Officer of Health (Temporray).

*To the Chairman of the Urban District
Council of Wellington, Som.*

23rd February, 1914.

SIR,—I have the honour to submit a report on the general health of the inhabitants and the sanitary conditions of the Urban District of Wellington (Som.) during the year 1913.

AREA.—The area of the district is 5,295 acres.

POPULATION.—The population at the 1911 census was 7,634. The estimated population for the year 1913 is 7,688. Owing, however, to emigration, this number must be largely in excess of the real number,—how much, it is impossible to ascertain.

WATER SUPPLY.—The water supply has been of good quality and quantity. In spite of the spell of dry weather last summer there was no shortage, and the water supply was not cut off. This was due to the new supply from the Payton spring coming into use, and providing an addition of 60 gallons per minute.

RIVER AND STREAMS. — No complaints were received of pollution of the local river or streams.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE. — This has been quite satisfactory during the year. No new sewers have been constructed.

SCAVENGING.— Scavenging has been well carried out, about 580 cubic yards of scavenging and scraping having been removed and 322 cubic yards of house refuse.

SANITARY INSPECTION.—Ordinary inspections of premises have been attended to by the Sanitary Inspector, in some cases after receipt of complaint and in others at the request of the owners.

NUISANCES.—Under this head 27 notices have been served, and the nuisances abated either by carrying out alterations and repairs, or otherwise.

These are exclusive of notices under the Housing and Town Planning Act. The various forms and causes of nuisance were as follows :— Choked and defective drains, 12 ; broken and defective w.c. pans and traps, 4 ; latrines dirty and offensive from neglect, 3 ; dirty and offensive yards, etc., 2 ; defective rain-water shuting and pipes, 5 ; keeping pigs too close to dwellings, 1.

LODGING HOUSES.— There are no registered common lodging houses in the district.

SCHOOLS.—The sanitary condition and water supply of the schools have been examined regularly and found satisfactory. Such small defects as were found were rectified.

DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS.—There are at present 20 registered dairymen, 14 of these being cowkeepers. These were regularly visited in company with the Sanitary Inspector and found in a fair condition considering that most of the cowsheds are of a very old type. In all cases the cows lay out for at least eight months of the year.

MILK SUPPLY.—There have been no complaints of the quantity or quality of the milk supplied during the year.

OTHER FOODS.—No cases have occurred of “unsound food.” There have been no prosecution under the Sale of Food and Drugs Act.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.— These were regularly examined and little found to complain of. In a few cases whitewashing was required. One yard was in a defective condition and one eject was defective.

BAKEHOUSES.—The nine bakehouses were also examined and found in a fair condition.

HOUSING.—During the year one new house was built. There are at the present time many empty houses, and if emigration continues this year as during the last there will be many more to record.

HOUSING AND TOWN PLANNING ACT.—168 inspections and 280 re-inspections were made.

~~136~~ notices to do work have been served, and ~~in~~
~~86 of these they~~ have been complied with.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.—These have been regularly inspected, and what defects have been noticed have been remedied.

NOTIFICATION AND PREVENTION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.—The following notifications of infectious disease (other than tuberculosis) were received: 10 of diphtheria, 6 scarlet fever, and 2 of typhoid. Of these cases, five were sent to the Tiverton Isolation Hospital. In the cases of diphtheria all contacts were swabbed if possible, and in all cases isolation of contacts was carried out as far as possible until they were pronounced free from infection. The rooms or houses of all were disinfected. The facilities given by the County Council for examining swabs of suspicious sore throats have been largely made use of by the medical men of the district. I have a supply of anti-diphtheritic serum and swabs in my charge, and these are supplied free to the medical men of the district.

TUBERCULOSIS.—21 notifications of pulmonary tuberculosis were received, and five of other forms of tuberculosis. There were two deaths from pulmonary tuberculosis and two from other forms. All cases notified were visited and advice given as to disposal of sputum, etc., and printed instructions were left with a view to preventing the infection of those in attendance. Many cases were sent to the Tuberculosis Officer, Dr. Short, at Taunton, and the homes of all were regularly visited by the nurse. Samples of sputum for examination have usually been sent through the Tuberculosis Officer. Eight cases were sent to the sanatoria at Cheddar and Stroud, and the other cases were treated by shelters at home and received benefits in the form of cod-liver oil, milk, and eggs.

DISINFECTION.—Disinfection was carried out by means of the Izal spray whitewashing, and papering and exposure to the open air in tuberculosis cases, and similarly or by formalin lamps in other cases. Where necessary, bedding, clothing, etc., was burnt.

VITAL STATISTICS.—The birth rate was 17·2 per 1,000. This is very low and much below the average. The death rate was 12·4 per 1,000. This compares favourably with former years and is below the average.

THE INFANT MORTALITY is likewise very low. Only seven deaths occurred below one year. Of these four were due to premature birth or malformation. This would give a death rate of 22·7 per 1,000, or 53 per 1,000 births for the total of seven.

CAUSES OF DEATH.—Cancer was the cause of death in 14 cases, bronchitis in 10, and heart disease in 9. The total number of deaths belonging to the district was 95. There were two deaths from zymotic disease, viz., one typhoid, and one diphtheria. The ages at death were as follows :—

Under 1 year.....	7
1 and „ 2 „	3
2 „ „ 5 „	4
5 „ „ 15 „	7
15 „ „ 25 „	1
25 „ „ 45 „	6
45 „ „ 65 „	24
65 and upwards	43
	—
	95

I wish to thank your Sanitary Inspector, Mr. Howard, and Mr. Glass for the great assistance they have been to me in drawing up this report.—

I remain, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

R. W. H. MEREDITH, M.R.C.S.,

Medical Officer of Health (temporary),

Wellington (Som.) Urban Sanitary District.